

Unexpected cannabis use reduction with Nicotine Replacement Therapy in adolescents: case study and mini-review

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Introduction: We present a case study that illustrates an observed phenomenon in which some young people appear to experience a rapid, unexpected reduction in cannabis use when prescribed Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT).

Abstract body text: NRT has previously been proposed as a treatment tool for use in cannabis withdrawal, as there is evidence that NRT helps relieve the negative affect seen in cannabis withdrawal (Gilbert et al., 2020). However, the benefit of NRT for the concurrent use of cannabis and nicotine in adolescents is not well characterised.

In our Youth Drug and Alcohol Service, we see young people with moderate to severe substance use. The most common primary substance of concern for our clients is cannabis. Nicotine Replacement Therapy patches are a key part in our strategy of managing the concurrent use of tobacco with cannabis (as "spin") or concurrent use of E-cigarettes. We are aware that concurrent nicotine use is a predictor for poor outcomes in treatment of cannabis use disorder (Lee et al., 2014) and that capturing outcomes for people who co-use cannabis and nicotine is relatively overlooked in treatment trials.(McClure et al., 2020)

This case study illustrates a potential avenue for future research: to characterise the utility of Nicotine Replacement Therapy as an important component in the management of concurrent cannabis and nicotine use in young people.

Discussions and Conclusions:

This anonymised case presentation will describe the illustrative clinical course of one of our clients. This will be informed by a limited literature review.

Gilbert, D. G., Rabinovich, N. E., & McDaniel, J. T. (2020). Nicotine patch for cannabis withdrawal symptom relief: a randomized controlled trial. *Psychopharmacology*, 237(5), 1507-1519. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00213-020-05476-1>

Lee, D. C., Budney, A. J., Brunette, M. F., Hughes, J. R., Etter, J.-F., & Stanger, C. (2014). Treatment models for targeting tobacco use during treatment for cannabis use disorder: Case series. *Addictive Behaviors*, 39(8), 1224-1230. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.addbeh.2014.04.010>

McClure, E. A., Rabin, R. A., Lee, D. C., & Hindocha, C. (2020). Treatment Implications Associated with Cannabis and Tobacco Co-Use. *Curr Addict Rep*, 7(4), 533-544. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40429-020-00334-8>

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